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SENSITIVE

DHS/CBP FOR KEITH THOMSON
STATE PASS TO USTR
STATE FOR IO AND NEA/ELA

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ETRD](#) [AORC](#) [EFIN](#) [PINR](#) [JO](#)
SUBJECT: JORDAN ANNOUNCES CANDIDATE FOR WCO CHAIRMANSHIP;
SEEKS U.S. SUPPORT

¶1. (SBU) The Foreign Ministry informed Embassy via diplomatic note June 4 that Jordan is nominating Customs Director General Ala'a Batayneh for the World Customs Organization chairmanship in the WCO election being held in Brussels at the end of the month. The GoJ seeks U.S. support for the nomination. Post is forwarding to NEA/ELA a copy of the c.v. that accompanied the dip note. Text of the note follows.

BEGIN TEXT OF DIPLOMATIC NOTE:

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
No. AD2/Tarshihat/1782

June 1, 2006

Jordan will nominate Eng. Ala'a Batayneh, Director General of Customs, for the position of Chairman of the World Customs Organization in elections that will be held in Brussels, Belgium during the meeting of the organization's Council in the period June 30 - July 1, 2006.

The Foreign Ministry appreciates the support of embassies for this nomination and also enclosed the c.v. of Eng. Batayneh with this note.

END TEXT OF DIPLOMATIC NOTE.

¶2. (SBU) COMMENT: U.S.-educated DG Batayneh is well and favorably known to Embassy. Jordan's Customs Department has always been a leader in the region and, although he has only been in the job for a year, Batayneh has demonstrated himself to be an effective champion of policies with which the U.S. has much in common. We believe he would make an excellent WCO Chairman.

¶3. (SBU) BIO NOTE: Batayneh was confirmed Customs Director General on May 31, 2005. He had been Secretary General at the Ministry of Transport since 2000. Batayneh studied at George Washington University (GWU), where he received a BSc. degree in electrical engineering; he received an MSc. from GWU in 1993. As Transport Ministry SecGen, he gave strong support to bolstering Jordan's critical transit trade with Iraq. He also made significant contributions to Jordan's transportation infrastructure development. He played a major role in bringing to an end a truck association's virtual monopoly via a trucking queue system at Aqaba port; shippers at Aqaba now choose trucking companies based on their record, not based on which truck is next in line. Batayneh has demonstrated a keen desire to continue to develop the GOJ

Customs Department as an adaptive, active, and dynamic organization; it is already a leader among customs departments in the Middle East and North Africa region. He is married to Princess Rahma, daughter of Prince Hassan (the late King Hussein's youngest brother). END BIO NOTE.
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